1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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activities in small farm economy. The plots so designated 231
are devoted, respectively, to cattle-grazing, hay, tillage crops 241
for human and animal consumption, and turf for fuel, and 311
rough summer grazing. Nearer the house is the farmyard or "haggard," in which the hayrick and turfrick are and other supplies, such as potatoes stored in straw bins, stand ready for household and farm use.

The house opens directly into the haggard. There are 231
the cabins, in which the cattle are housed, and the various 343
sheds and stalls, often built out of the dry masonry of the 351
house itself, in which the farm machines, traps, sidecars, carts, and other vehicles are kept. Hens and other poultry roam at will through the haggard and are fed and housed there, and in one of the sheds the pig or pigs find their quarters. As for the house itself, which gives orientation to the haggard and is responsible for the spatial arrangements in it, we shall have occasion to discuss it somewhat later.

Figure 8 gives a schematic view of the kind of farm called 231
"all-purpose land" by the Irish Land Commission. This view 241
is a composite and represents no single farm, but it is taken 311
from direct observation of many in Clare. It depicts a mountain farm in which bog land is included. Otherwise it would do for any area.

Figure 9 gives a schematic view of a house and haggard 342
also in Clare. This is modeled after a house in which one of 343
the authors spent considerable time as a guest, and is carefully and faithfully depicted. But it serves, too, as a general 351
plan for all such houses of small farmers.

The daily activity of the farm family and the daily work 512
which its members carry on center round the house and haggard. Even for the men, whose primary work lies in the fields, gardens, and meadows, work centers in and round the house for a good part of the year. A short sketch of the daily activity which may be observed in any peasant farmhouse will throw into relief the work done by the various

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1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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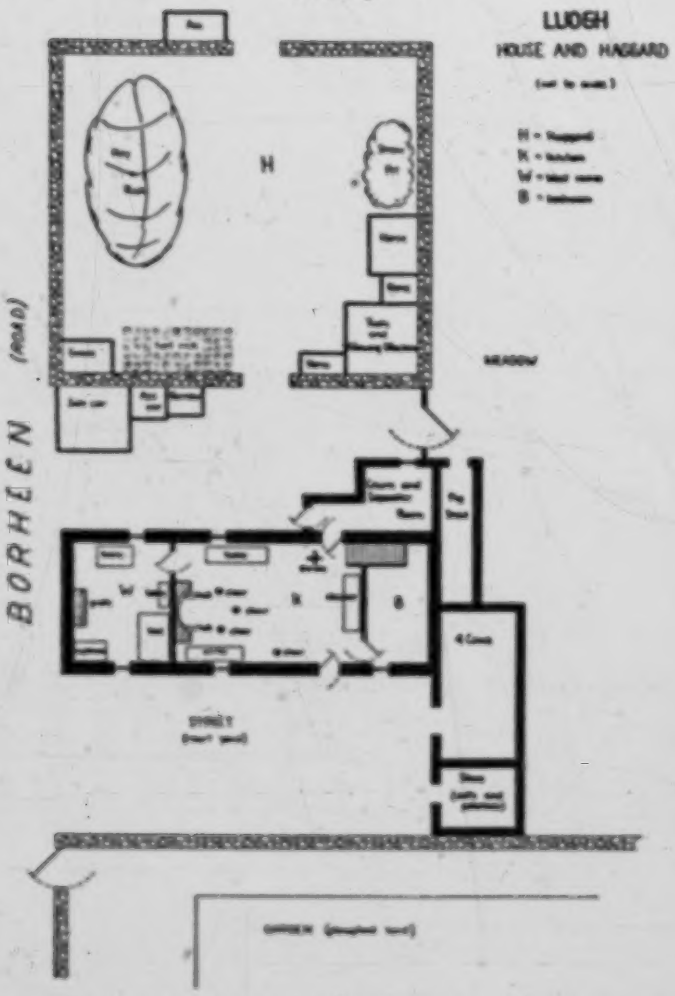
FIGURE 9



Schematic plan of a typical small farmer's house and farmyard, illustrating his familial economy and functional division of his household.

[p.34]

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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A JAUNTING CAR "FACES THE ROAD"

[facing p. 148]

than 30 statute acres is regarded as small, one of from 30 to 100 acres as of medium size and one of over 100 acres as large. Small, medium and large farms may be found in all parts of Ireland, but in the provinces of Leinster and Munster and in parts of south east Connaught there is a preponderance of medium sized farms with, especially in north Leinster, a considerable proportion of large farms.[1] All this area practises mixed farming, but the south western province, Munster, is completely dominated by the milking cow, while in Leinster the northern half is mainly devoted to the raising of beef cattle, and the southern half produces considerable quantities of wheat, oats and barley.[2] In most areas of Connaught and Ulster, the western and northern provinces, the average farm is of small size, and the number of cows kept by each farmer correspondingly small; the value and productivity of these small farms, however, vary greatly from the intensive cultivation of many farms in east and south Ulster to the fisher-farmer economy of the west coastal districts.[3]

Throughout the provinces of Leinster and Munster, and in parts of east Connaught, that is to say, generally in the area of medium and large farms, the predominant, and in many districts exclusive, farmyard type is the courtyard, in which the dwelling house and outhouses are arranged about a rectangular space which is the farmyard proper. Most usually the buildings form three sides of the yard, with the dwelling house forming one side and the outhouses forming two more, the fourth side being closed by a wall with a gate. Usually the building is not continuous, the elements being separate and connected by walls, or having gateways or passages between them. The size and arrangement of the yard and the various buildings vary from one farm to another, and also from district to district; the general type is, however, well established, and conforms to a pattern which is clearly distinguished from the other types to be described later. In many districts the front of the dwelling house faces the farmyard, thus, in Co. Kildare in 1807: "The farmhouses in general consist of a long thatched building of one storey, consisting of a large kitchen and fireplace in the centre, and lodging rooms at either end; the front door looks to the barns and stables on the right, behind which is the haggard, and on the left are placed the cow and bullock houses." This, written a century and a half ago,[4] exactly describes many of the farmyards of to-day, for example that shown in fig. 1, which has the dwelling house in the middle, the cowhouse, calfhouse and a small store (formerly a dairy) on the left, with the manure heap behind them, while on the right are the stable, another store and the pigstye, with the haggard, where the hay and corn stacks are made, behind them. The fourth side is formed by a stone wall, with a gate; this wall fronts on the public roadway. This farmyard is at Duncormick, Co. Wexford, in the south east corner of Ireland, but similar examples may be found in almost every part of the east and south. Figure 2 shows the buildings on a larger farm, also in Co. Wexford. Here the entrance gate leads in between a cart shed on the right and the dairy on the left, with the pump close by. Facing the dwelling house across the yard are the stable and byre and a store, while the corn barn opens into the haggard. The pigsty and manure heap are in the part of the yard most distant from the dwelling house. The openings between the various buildings are closed by stone walls about

[Text continues on p. 12]

[1] Agricultural Statistics, 1847-1926. Stationery Office, Dublin, 1930.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Passmore, T. W.: Ireland, Its Physical, Historical, Social and Economic Geography, 1950, chapters VIII and XVIII to XXIII.

[4] Rawson, T. J.: Statistical Survey of the County of Kildare, 1807, 14-15.

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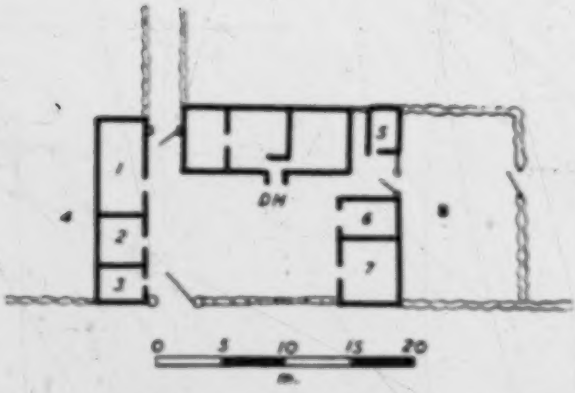

Fig. 1. Farmyard at Dunormuck, Co. Wexford. DH, dwelling house; 1, byre; 2, calf house; 3, store; 4, manure heap; 5, pigsty; 6, cart house; 7, stable; 8, haggard.

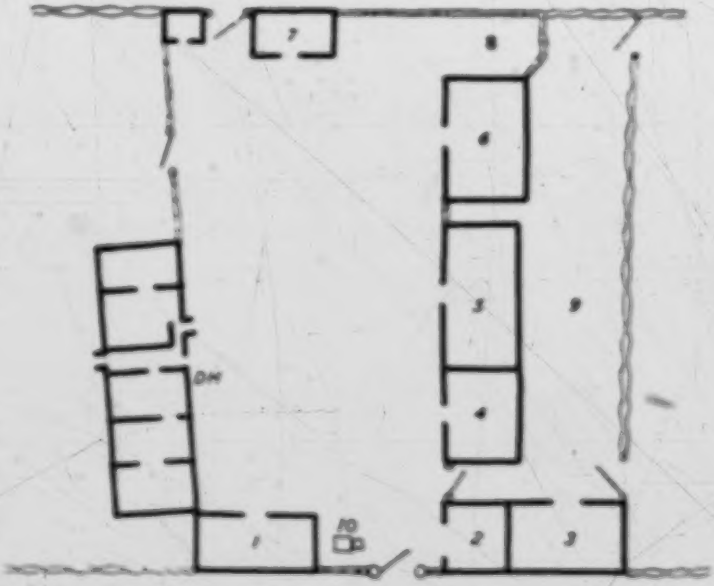

Fig. 2. Farmyard at Kilmore, Co. Wexford. DH, dwelling house; 1, dairy; 2, cart house; 3, corn barn; 4, stable; 5, byre; 6, store; 7, pigsty; 8, manure heap; 9, haggard; 10, pump.

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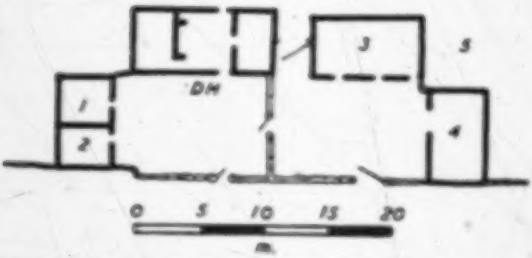

Fig. 3. Farmyard, Killinny, Co. Galway. DH, dwelling house; 1, dairy; 2, store; 3, byre; 4, stable and cart; 5, manure heap.

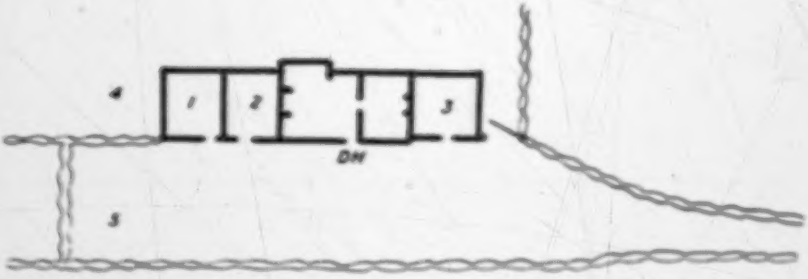

Fig. 4. Farmyard at Glenhull, Co. Tyrone. DH, dwelling house; 1, byre; 2, stable; 3, store; 4, haggard; 5, manure heap.

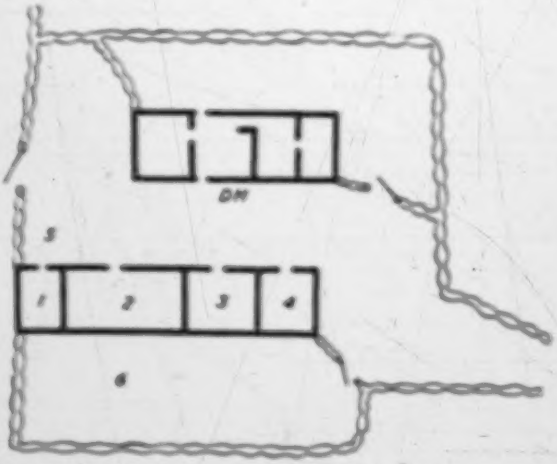

Fig. 5. Farmyard, Athea, Co. Limerick. DH, dwelling house; 1, pigs; 2, byre; 3, stable; 4, store; 5, manure heap; 6, haggard.

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Fig. 6. Farmhouse and yard, Kilmore, Co. Wexford (fig. 2).
Fig. 7. Farmyard, Killeany, Co. Galway (fig. 3).

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Fig. 1. Farm buildings, Glenhull, Co. Tyrone (fig. 4).
Fig. 2. Farm buildings, pendial lay-out, Lohar, Co. Kerry.

[p. 11]

four feet high, with gates suitably placed. A door in the back of the dwelling house leads into a garden and orchard. In both these examples the front of the dwelling house is towards the yard, but in very many examples the back of the dwelling house is towards the yard, which is reached by a back door, while the front of the house faces a small garden with flowers and fruit trees through which a path leads to the front door. This is especially common in east Munster. Figure 3 shows the buildings on a smaller farm in the south-eastern part of Co. Galway. Here again we have a courtyard formed by buildings on three sides and a stone wall with a gate on the fourth, but the courtyard is divided into two parts by another wall which protects the portion in front of the dwelling house, which is a little garden with flowers and shrubs, from the animals which pass through the yard.

In the smaller farms of the north and west there usually are fewer buildings, and these are often joined together in one continuous row, as in the example shown in figure 4, on a small farm in Co. Tyrone, where dwelling house, stable, byre and a store form one long block of buildings. Here, the elements are clearly distinguished from each other—the byre and stable are more roughly built, with poorer roof timbers and thinner walls, than the dwelling house, while the store at the other end is narrower than the dwelling house and has a lower roof. Indeed most examples of this well-known and widespread type have the dwelling house clearly distinguishable from the outhouses; thus they must not be confused with the "long-house" of Wales, of which the distinctive feature is internal communication between the byre and the dwelling.[1] In contrast to this, there is no such internal communication in this Irish type, as each house, stable, byre, store and so on has its own entrance door, and very often the dwelling house and byre do not adjoin, but have a stable, store or dairy between them. But, as we shall see below, there is—or was until recently—a primitive form of the "long house" or combined dwelling house and cattle byre to be found in certain parts of Ireland.

Another farmyard form to be found in parts of the north and west, and especially in the hill districts and peninsulas of west Munster, is shown in fig. 5. Here the outhouses are built in one continuous row, and placed a short distance away from, and parallel to, the dwelling house; the space between the dwelling house and the outhouses serving not only as a yard but also as a passage between the public road and the farmer's fields; this yard or passage is, in many districts, called the "street".

In addition to these various farmyard types, there may be found farms in which the buildings are not arranged in any set plan, but are scattered about in a haphazard fashion, sometimes without any yard; these occur but rarely in fertile lowlands but are not infrequent in mountain and moorland localities, such as parts of the Kerry mountains.

It cannot be doubted that the system of having separate compartments or buildings for the different kinds of animals and stores is of considerable antiquity in Ireland. The law tract *Críth Gablach*, written about A.D. 700, states that the *bó-aire féchtsa* (a certain grade of land owner) must have, in addition to his dwelling house and a share in a corn-mill, a kiln, a barn, a sheep-fold, a pigsty and a calf-pen.[2] Another ancient law tract[3] refers to five "houses", namely, dwelling house, cow-

[1] Peate, I. C., The Welsh House, 1940, chapter 11.
[2] Ancient Laws of Ireland, vol. IV, Dublin, 1879, 370.
[3] Ancient Laws of Ireland, vol. V, Dublin, 1901, 315.

house, pigsty, calf-pen and sheepfold, and there are several other references in the ancient law tracts to cow-houses and pigsties.

But, notwithstanding this old and varied farmyard tradition, it is also quite clear that there was, up to the beginning of the present century, a widespread custom of keeping the livestock, or part of it, in the dwelling house. There are very many references to this in descriptions of life and conditions in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Few, however, give any description of the internal arrangement of the houses, or the reason for the custom, and usually the accounts refer to small houses and a few poor animals. Some observers have mentioned the fear of wild beasts or robbers. "They are brought in by night for fear of thieves, the Irish using almost no other kind of theft, or else for fear of wolves."[1] Here the writer refers to the bawns attached to the castles, but of course the same risk existed for the small farmer also. Another traveller writes of a night spent in a house in west Co. Galway: "I had just compos'd myselfe to sleepe when I was strangely surprised to heare the cows and sheep all comeing into my bed chamber. I enquired the meaneing and was told it was to preserve them from the wolfe which everie night was rambling about for prey."[2] Another and much later writer describes a night spent in a small house in the Kerry mountains, near Kenmare: "In the house where I slept—as indeed in every house of the same character in the county—the whole stock of the family, consisting chiefly of cows and sheep, were locked in at night. Such was the extreme poverty of the people that they would not otherwise be safe. ... There was a slight partition between the room where my bed was and the kitchen where there were three cows, a man, his wife and four children."[3]

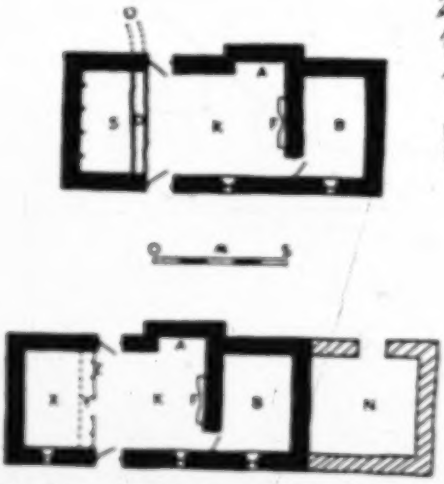

Fig. 10 House at Doohregh, Co. Mayo. A, bed alcove; B, bedroom; D, drain; O, drain outlet; K, kitchen; F, fireplace; S, byre.

Fig. 11. House at Srahnaggle, Co. Mayo. A, bed alcove; B, bedroom; K, kitchen; F, fireplace; X, former byre; Y, filled-in drain; Z, screen of canvas on wooden frame; N, present byre.

In many dwelling houses fowl, especially hatching hens, were kept in special coops or boxes, and it was quite usual to have weak or sickly young animals, or calves or lambs which for some reason were separated from their dams, in the kitchen where they had warmth and attention until strong enough to be put with the other animals. In many parts of Ireland the poorer people—

[1] Petty, Montgomery Manuscripts, 1917.
[2] Dunton, John: Letter no. 2 (1698), in MacLysaght, E.: Irish Life in the Seventeenth Century, 1939, 339.
[3] Downey, M.: The Poleen's Track.

those who had little or no land—commonly kept their animals in the dwelling house (which often had only one room) at night, a cow or two, or perhaps a donkey or pony, a pig or a goat and a few hens, the larger animals tied to pegs or rings set in the walls, the smaller in coops or boxes. In many houses, even large farmhouses, a special coop or perch was provided for the cock, whose crowing served to call the people of the house in the morning. A vivid description of the housing conditions of a remote and isolated community in the second half of the nineteenth century is given by Tomás Ó Crohan, writing about the Blasket Islands off the coast of Co. Kerry in the extreme south west: "There was a coop beside the partition with hens in it, and a hatching hen in an old pot nearby. At night a cow or two, a calf or two, an ass, two dogs tied to the wall or loose about the house. ... the two or three dogs would lie at the foot of the bed, the cow or two cows below them, tethered to the wall, the calf or two with the run of the kitchen and their muzzles in the fire. The ass was tied on the side of the house opposite the cows, and a cat with a couple of kittens in the fireplace niche ... And as well as all the other animals you might find a pet lamb or two about the house."[1] The custom of bringing the cattle into the dwelling house for milking during the period of the year when they are kept outdoors, as well as keeping them in the dwelling house during the winter period is recorded from Co. Kerry.[2] Indeed it is quite clear that, throughout the west and north of Ireland, the keeping of livestock in their small dwelling houses by the poorer people was quite a common practice up to the last years of the nineteenth century, and in houses from which the animals have long been ejected we may still see the rings or pegs to which they used to be tied.

There was, however, one type of house which was built and arranged as a dwelling for both people and animals, and which was still in use in the early years of the present century in parts of Connaught and Ulster, that is, in west Co. Galway, Co. Mayo, west Co. Sligo and west and north Co. Donegal. Figure 10 shows the plan of a typical specimen, at Doolough, Co. Mayo. This house is 12 m long and 5.5 m wide, built of stone and mortar and roofed with straw or grass thatch. It consists of two apartments, the smaller being a bedroom and the larger a kitchen-livingroom-cattle byre; the two apartments separated by the wall of the hearth. On one side of the hearth is a bed alcove. Two windows, one in each room and both on one side—the front—of the house, give light, and there are two doors, one in the front of the house and one in the back, placed directly opposite each other. On the farther side of these doors from the fire an open drain extends from side to side of the house; this drain is about 50 cm wide and 25 cm deep and is lined with flat stones. The space between this drain and the end wall of the house is the byre, and here, during the winter, three or four cows were kept tethered to the wall. The drain passed under the wall and led to the manure heap outside.

Figure 11 shows the manner in which many of these houses were changed during the last fifty years or so. A byre was built, attached to the house, as here, or quite apart from it. The drain was filled in, and a partition of wood, or, as here of canvas stretched on a wooden frame, erected to enclose the former byre which now became a bedroom. In many houses the partition was formed

[1] Ó Crohan, Tomás: An tOileánach, chapter III.

[2] Campbell, Åke: "Irish Fields and Houses", Béaloideas, V, 68–70.

or partly formed by one or more large pieces of furniture, such as a dresser and a cupboard or press.

While recorded instances of this type are, as we have seen, confined to comparatively small areas of the west and north west, there is little doubt that identical or similar forms were once more widespread in Ulster, Connaught and parts of west Munster, where a strong folk-memory of the regular stalling of cattle in the lower end (the end farthest from the fire) of the kitchen still exists, and where one common house type has the two opposite doors and the lower end cut off by a partition of light material, as in the reconstructed house shown in figure 11. In Leinster and east Munster, in contrast to this, there is little or no tradition of cattle in the dwelling houses, and there is here a form of house in which the relative positions of the entrance door, hearth and hearth wall[1] would make the bringing of a large animal, such as a cow, into the house very difficult and in many cases quite impossible.

A recent article has shown that while the dispersed settlement pattern now dominates almost the whole of Ireland, there were formerly, and to a little extent still are, certain definite areas of village or group settlement type.[2] This, however, does not mean that a distinctive type of farmyard pattern is to be found in such groups or villages; on the contrary, the farmyard type in them is the same as that in the adjoining areas of dispersed settlement. Thus, the groups or villages of east Co. Galway and south Co. Kilkenny are formed of farmyards of the courtyard type, those of west Co. Kerry of the parallel type and those of west Co. Mayo and north and west Co. Donegal of the dwelling house-cum-byre type.

The middle of the twentieth century sees the Irish farmyard, in common with many other elements of rural life, in a stage of transition. On many farms new outhouses, especially new cattle-byres, are being built; in others new dwelling houses have been built, and the old dwelling houses refitted as byres, stores or stables, thus quite changing the aspect of the farmyard. The dwelling-cum-byre type of the north west has virtually disappeared, and in a few years will be no more than a memory; the extended type, in which dwelling house and outhouses form a long block of buildings is also disappearing.

[1] Ó Danachair, Caoimhín: "Hearth and Chimney in the Irish House", *Béaloideas*, xvi, 102, 104.

[2] Flatrès, P.: "L'Habitat Agricole Aggloméré en Irlande", *Chronique Géographique des Pays Celtes*, 1954, 112–24.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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137 bound by innumerable ties to a countryside richer and fuller
[262] than that of to-day. Thus birch, rowan, hazel, thorn, sally and holly all had their special purposes, and yew was in great demand for croziers and shrines. So we might go on down to the humblest lichen (for crottle dye) and the seaweed (Chapter 26). Bog timber, oak and "fir," had many uses—for furniture and implements, for roofs, gates, slide-cars and boat-timber as well as for fir ropes and lighting "splits." Superstitious customs are associated with several of the native trees, especially the rowan, the ash, hazel and whitethorn (Chap. 28).

Sycamore and beech, neither of them native to Ireland, have been extensively planted in recent centuries and grow so well that many have assumed them to be indigenous. The beech loves the well-drained moraines, while the sycamore,
● [351] one of the few trees which will stand up to the full force of the salt-laden winds, is planted in coastal districts for the shelter it provides: behind its dense summer foliage many a
313 low cabin lies hidden. Its white easily-worked timber is
139 sought by the wood-turner. Formerly the beetling engines of the linen country made a demand for beech and sycamore—the former for the beaters and the latter for the great beam. On steep hillsides which man has been unable to utilize one may still see patches of what may be regarded as wild scrub, a tangle of hazel, ash, black and white thorn, or birch, rowan and alder; but apart from the high-walled demesnes where giant trees are allowed to grow old and rot, the Irish landscape
137 is singularly bare of timber. Visitors from England will notice the poor development of hedgerow trees except for the ash of Co. Meath. This must be attributed largely to the fact that hedge trees have to grow in raised banks or "ditches," as they are called. Hedges and trees are very rarely planted on the level, for the ditch-tradition is older than the hedge. To quote Young once more: "I never saw a single capital tree growing on these banks." But there is some compensation, in autumn, in the wealth of blackberries which they produce (Fig. 10).

137 Travellers of the early 19th century constantly refer to
311 landscapes without a single tree or shrub or any trace of

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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hedgerows. It is hard to realise that the close-set pattern of hedged or walled fields which now distinguishes so much of the countryside is for the most part only a century or so old. In many cases it can be shown that the fields and fences were laid out within the last hundred years, following the break-up of the rundale village system and the re-distribution of the land (Chapter 6). In the eastern lowlands, where English influence has long been at work, the field pattern and hedgerows are no doubt much older, but in general the small cultivated patches were separated by mere balks or waste strips, varying from one to ten feet in width. Stones from the fields, hand-picked or removed with crow-bar and slipe (Chapter 22) were dumped on the balks or, more frequently, piled into "cairns" in the middle of the fields. Such stone-heaps are often found accompanying prehistoric field-systems, for example in Jutland.

Fig. 10.

Stone walls or high earthen fences surrounded the house-clusters and enclosed each group of open fields, separating them from the common grazing land which lay outside and stretched away to the "head-ditch" on the mountain. As the rundale holdings gave way to individual farms the land was re-divided, the old ditches planted with whitethorn and new ditches, also set with thorn, were constructed—a process which was being actively carried out during the first half of the 19th century. One result of the scattering of the farms was the appearance of the long strip or "ladder farms," the cross hedges of the strip resembling the rungs of a ladder.

The oldest fences, then, are the protective banks around farms which occupy old village sites—a survival no doubt of the rings around the ancient raths—and the march-dykes or divisions between townlands. The varied vegetation on these older banks betrays them just as it does the pre-enclosure hedgerows in England: their massive tumbled ruins are overgrown with whins, blackthorn, sally, ash and bramble. There are, however, still older forgotten divisions on the hillsides dating from various prehistoric periods; some have

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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172 311 351 been discovered under many feet of peat. Several types can be recognised, for example those with upright stones at intervals, which are sometimes left as "standing stones" after the intervening walls have been removed. Old field fences at Cush, Co. Limerick, claimed to be contemporary with raths of the late Bronze Age and "essentially similar to those built by an Irish farmer of to-day" have been described by Professor O'Riordain. This appears to be a striking example of continuity, for the fences are closely followed by existing field-boundaries. Since they lie some 800 ft. above sea-level they do not invalidate the general picture I shall draw in the following chapter, but it is clear that much more work on the lines followed at Cush is required.

351 314 139 [231] Hedges of whins (that is, gorse or furze) about the farmstead are much prized not only for the shelter they afford to stock—they are dense and do not drip—but because they form an admirable clothes line on washing day and a ready source of kindling wood. Formerly the young whin shoots were crushed and fed to horses. The heavy wooden maul and stone block used in the process may still be seen occasionally. It would require years of enquiry and observation to describe and classify the types of sod ("scraw") earth and stone fences which now parcel out the Irish soil into its patchwork of small fields. One may easily recognise the sod ditches of the rich grazing lands of Meath, with their tall thorn hedges and ash trees giving shelter to the cattle, the well-built dry-stone walls of the granite mountain slopes which vainly seek to stop the black-faced sheep, and the loose lace-like walls precariously constructed out of rough boulders in the moraimic hills.

351 311 139 In the wind-swept mountains and along the coasts the ditches are hedgeless, carrying only a tangle of heather or whins and an occasional stunted tree, but throughout the lowlands the prevailing type of fence is a stone-faced bank of sods, in the side of which quick-thorn is planted (Fig. 10). These are cut back ruthlessly at longish intervals and are never pleached in the English way, so that the hedge is full of gaps. Occasion-

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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ally one comes across very wide ditches of this type with a double hedge and paths or even cart-tracks in between, for example in Co. Limerick. In Rathlin Island the only hedge material that seems to escape the ravages of goats is the balsam poplar. Another plant of New World origin, born in Scotland of South American parents, is the Fuchsia, which runs riot along the coasts. Basket willows and wild "black sallies" for creels are sometimes grown—the latter has the advantage that it is not cropped by cattle.

The scarcity of good oak timber in a country once famed for its oaks—notice the frequency of the element "derry" in townland names—goes far to explain the prevalence of iron field-gates, which are hung on stout pillars of built stone. The newcomer to Ireland cannot fail to be struck by the massive gateposts along the roadsides and about the farm premises. In many districts they are whitewashed annually, and since they often assume proportions out of all relation to their function they are unnaturally conspicuous in a landscape bare of heavy timber. In parts of Ulster, for instance, they are such a characteristic feature of the countryside that it is difficult to imagine it without their cheering twinned greeting. Yet most of them must have been erected within the last century or so: writers of Irish travels before that time frequently comment on the absence of gates, for which in fact there was very limited need so long as the rundale system of farming persisted (Chapter 6). In the small village-communities of the west where the old scheme still prevails the gaps in the fences that surround the open field are closed with jagged root-stumps dragged from the bogs, or with a few thorn bushes. Sampson, writing of Co. Derry in 1814, states that gates were almost unknown except near towns, and that a common substitute was a hay-rope strung with thorns—an interesting rustic forerunner of the hated barbed wire.

Gate pillars and stiles

Fig. 11.

It might appear from the association of built piers with landlords' residences in Donegal that settlers introduced them to Ireland, but I am far from convinced that this is the

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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explanation. It is true that they occur in Anglesea and in parts of the Scottish lowlands, but in both cases they are likely to be due to Irish influence. It seems to me more probable that an indigenous custom was taken up and diffused by improving landlords. I like to think of the Irish rath defended and glorified by two white stone pillars at the entrance, though I confess that this finds no support in reports of archæological excavations. The only dated piers I know bear the date 1839, but there is an eight-foot pair in Inishowen which, tradition says, had already lost their gates in 1709. The variety of styles and the superstitious beliefs connected with the pillars do strongly suggest that their origin is to be sought far back.

I imagine they were used, before the general adoption of fences, to shut off the farmyard from the surrounding open field. Mr. T. G. F. Paterson tells me that in Co. Armagh the gateposts are sometimes referred to as "husband and wife." The most popular shape is cylindrical (Fig. 11), and the average dimensions about three feet in diameter and six feet high. Pretentious specimens may be as high as ten feet. The top is generally finished in a low cone but varies considerably from one district to another: in some parts they are flat-topped "so that the fairies can dance on them." In Co. Meath the usual shape is semi-circular and may have originated in the common practice of building the pillars against a wall at the entrance to the farmyard. In some counties they are square, with a pyramidical roof or a coping of large stones.

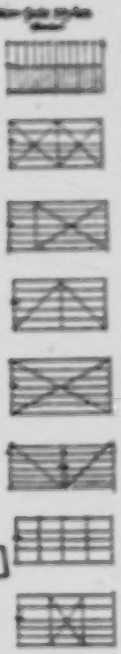

Fig. 11

The gates, whether of iron or wood fitted with iron straps, are generally hung in an old-fashioned way: they pivot in a stone socket or "spud-stone," while the top of the heel turns in a perforated stone, nowadays replaced by an iron eye. The gates are not seldom made by the smith, who fashions them out of worn wheel hoops, for instance; and this helps to explain the pleasing absence of standardisation. Fastenings, too, are of many different kinds. Only in a few wooded areas are home-made wooden gates popular: they are light

[326]

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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constructions of pegged branches, interwoven it may be with willow or hazel and turning in hoops of wire or cord on a wooden post. But as often as not, even where there are built gate-pillars, the gap is closed with an old cart or a few thorn bushes. The Irishman does not take the same pride as the English farmer in having a well-hung gate. It would appear that more importance is attached to the gateposts than to the gate!

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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343 "troubles" of 25 years ago. Moreover underground "hides" have been constructed in recent times by poteen-makers. A description of a Donegal example said to have been made about 150 years ago will be found in *Antiquity*, June, 1939, p. 220.

351 361 Finally, something should be said about the disposition of the farm buildings, but this is a subject which calls for research. Broadly speaking the arrangement native to the country is some kind of long house, with the offices under the same roof as the kitchen and room. I use the word "native" because in areas of strong English influence such as Wexford what seems to be an introduced type of lay-out is the courtyard style where the buildings are grouped round the sides of a square. There are many approximations to this arrangement in various parts of the east and south of Ireland, and I do not think, as my friend Colonel R. G. Berry has suggested, that the type is native. Where the Old Irish homestead has a number of outbuildings these tend to be placed in front of and parallel to the dwelling house. Efforts to persuade the peasant to put his manure heap and his animals behind the house have, until recently, failed, for he likes to keep an eye on his wealth!

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Aran Islands

Plate V.

285
516
291
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MAKING A SKIB
INISHERE, ARAN
CREEL IN GROUND BEHIND

[Facing p. 121]

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

Ireland. Barrett, Burke, Carey, Joyce, M'Andrew, Walsh, and probably Williams (if it be, as is alleged, a form of Mac William or Mac Quillin). 551

(c.) The immigrants from Ulster come next, amongst whose descendants are said to be the O'Donnells, Connells, Dugherys, Gallaghers, Geraghtys, Reillys (from Cavan), and perhaps M'Loughlins.

(d.) The Mac Cormicks came into the district in the reign of James I.

(e.) Last come names of English origin, the most ancient of which seems to be Bingham, dating from the reign of Elizabeth. Tóilet, and probably Dixon, are names of descendants of the Shane settlers. The other English names are of shorter standing, and some of them may really be anglicised local surnames.

The names of the English settlers signed to the petition to Sir Henry Bingham, sometime in the reign of Queen Anne, are Higginbotham, Maxwell, Dennistoun, Linney, Langford, Tollett, Houston, Parker, Gamble, Calwell, and Low; of these, Tollett is the only one now found in the parish, if Gammell be not a corrupted form of Gamble.[1]

IV.—Sociology.

1. *Occupations.*—Excluding the inhabitants of the little town of Belmullet, in which most of the tradesmen reside, the people are, as a rule, either fishermen or farmers, or they combine both occupations. There are a few large holders and proprietors, but the majority of the farms are of small size. These holdings are but poorly fenced, a frequent cause of dispute. Fences are usually earthen or turf, but on the islands dry stone walls, such as are seen in Aran, are common. The principal crops are barley, oats, rye, and potatoes. All the farming is rude and primitive. Spade labour is practically universal, the spades being of modern form, as the old "gowel"[2] or "gowel-gob," a two-bladed or forked wooden spade formerly used here, has long been extinct. 463 241 [351] [412]

In 1834 there were only 3 ploughs and the same number of carts in use in the Mullet: now (1895) the number of ploughs is 30, and of carts 63. [407] [493]

[1] Though these settlers are spoken of as English by the various writers who have mentioned the colony, yet the majority of these surnames appear to be Scotch.

[2] A specimen of this curious agricultural implement is figured in the Catalogue of Antiquities of the Royal Irish Academy.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

where the land has been almost the sole available resource go far to explain the jealousy with which established rights are maintained, but there are deeper needs and bonds in the rural community.

FIG. 4. Map of scattered farms on the Co. Down coast, showing seaweed-roads. (Based upon the Ordnance map with the sanction of the Controller, H.M.S.O.)

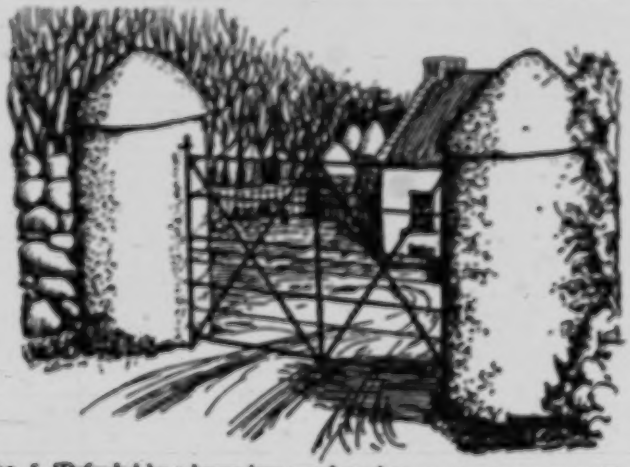

FIG. 5. 'Defended by a heavy iron gate hung between stout stone gate-pillars:' an Ulster farm.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Antrim

PLATE 6

243
516
291
41.

1. Shearing oats with the toothed sickle, Co. Antrim.

291
342
351
243
412

2. Thrashing oats with flails, Co. Antrim.

[FACING p. 97]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

VIII

FARMYARDS AND FENCES

351 THE paved area in front of the traditional Irish farmhouse is known as 'the street', a word here used in its original sense of a pavement. The old style street is usually cobbled, and occasionally, especially along the coast where the materials lay to hand, neat arrangements of waterworn pebbles made a pretty pattern at the door. This is a technique of prehistoric origin which is found along the Atlantic coasts and in the Mediterranean region. The area around the hearth also may be pebbled, but I have not seen in Ireland the entire kitchen floor so treated, as in parts of Wales. There may be a stone bench against the front of the house near the door, and here, or in specially constructed wall coves across the cobbled street, pots and buckets are put out to dry (Fig. 32).

Immediately in front of the house is the traditional location of 237 the dungheap. 'The dunghill before each door' was commented 351 on by nearly every nineteenth-century traveller. The apologists, it is true, remind us that tenants would not move the dunghill for fear of having their rents raised because of 'improvements'. But its proximity to the dwelling house need occasion no surprise when we recall that down to a century or two ago, in remote parts, the dung was allowed to accumulate at the end of the living-room. We recall that in 1837 a school teacher wrote that some houses in Donegal had 'within their walls from ten to fifteen tons weight of dung, and only cleaned out once a year'.[1] Nowadays, however, from hygienic motives, the manure is removed to a less conspicuous part of the farmyard, though if possible still in sight of the door, for the farmer likes

[1] Lord George Hill, *Gweedore*, 17.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

to keep an eye on his wealth. The muck-heap is the source of good crops and good luck, a potent symbol of well-being: 'where there is muck there is luck'. It was the custom, recorded for instance in the Glens of Antrim, to stick a sprig of rowan tree upright in the midden on May Eve to protect the farm from mischievous fairies. The muck symbolizes the fertility of the farm.

FIG. 38. Keeping-hole for pets, Co. Down.

In many parts of the country, especially in the northern counties and in Co. Wexford, the entrance to the farmyard is dignified by a pair of massive stone gate piers, generally built-up from field-stones in the form of a conical topped cylinder and kept whitewashed. There are many modern variants in concrete, and the old style piers are steadily disappearing and are often hastened to their end by carelessly driven tractors or lorries. They seem far too massive for the gates they carry, resembling twin bastions defending the entrance to a fortified enclosure (Figs. 5, 35). In some areas, probably under the influence of improving landlords or land agents, field entrances are also dignified by built-up stone piers, and it is possible to explain the fashion as part of the agrarian revolution which resulted in enclosure. In the virtual absence of well-grown oak trees they provided an Irish alternative to the oak gate-post of the English farm, sturdy enough to carry the iron gate which for the same reason took the place of the five-barred oaken gate.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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FIG. 33. Gateposts, Co. Down. *Left*: built-up pier with stone hinge and spud-stone. *Right*: granite slab with iron hinge and spud-stone.

[342] The shortage of suitable timber also led to the disappearance of the native wattled house and of the introduced timber-framed house, and the fact that such houses were more combustible (and that wooden gates, as one observer remarked, would have been stolen for firewood) was of less importance. The prototype of the stone piers of the farmyard may perhaps be seen in the great entrance pillars of the fortified 'bawns' erected by the seventeenth-century planters. Yet the style is quaintly archaic, and they have often been compared to miniature round towers. Very stout examples do indeed resemble the stone beehive 'clochauns' which we describe later, except that they are solid. In their construction the method of marking out the circumference and maintaining a vertical line by means of a string attached to a central post which is later removed is primitive enough. Moreover the method of hanging the gate is archaic. It is the harr-hanging which is found also in Scotland, the Lake District, Cornwall and Brittany and has survived in these stony

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

refuge corners of Europe. The gate swings like a fire-crane, not on hinges or rings-and-hooks, but directly on its heel, on a projecting iron spud which swivels in a stone socket. These stone sockets or spud-stones are frequently seen around old farm sites, and very similar stones in Mesopotamia go back into the fifth millennium B.C. In the days before the iron gate was introduced wooden gates were hung in the same way, and we know from Scotland that they were sometimes tipped with stone.[1] A projecting stone perforated to hold the top of the gate-post (Fig. 33) has now been replaced, as a rule, by an iron eye.

In Co. Armagh I have heard the farm gate-piers referred to as the man and wife of the house, and one of the pair may have a flat top whereon, it is said, the fairies like to dance. The old people used to place the two first plates of champ—the Hallowe'en festival dish of mashed potatoes—on the top of the pier.[2] While all this may be nothing more than an exuberant play of fancy we cannot overlook the megalithic practice of selecting alternating pointed and flat-topped monoliths for some of their ritual erections, symbolizing, it is thought, male and female. The twin portal stones of many megalithic chamber graves come to mind, and pairs of such stones now standing in isolation, as at Lisdivin in Co. Tyrone,[3] may well have been a symbolic entrance to some vanished ceremonial enclosure. The tradition of large entrance piers dies hard. Not infrequently today the first thought of an improving farmer is to erect imposing concrete pillars at the entrance to his property. They are as a rule garishly painted and pebble-dashed, a poor substitute for their simple whitewashed forerunners.

In the early nineteenth century field gates were almost unknown except near towns, and we read of the rustic forerunner of the iniquitous barbed wire—a hay-rope strung with thorns.[4] In boggy areas one commonly sees the gnarled root stumps of bog trees doing service as a gate, much as the Canadian pioneer will make a temporary fence with grubbed-up stumps. The huge

[1] A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present* (1880), 127.
[2] Michael Murphy, *At Slieve Gullion's Foot* (1940), 64.
[3] O. Davies, *U.J.A.*, 2 (1939), 169.
[4] G. V. Sampson, *Memoir*, 288.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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351 417 defensive horns of the long-extinct Irish elk, dug from the bogs, have been utilized for this purpose! That the gate-piers are more significant than the gate is evident when one sees a bundle of thorns or a collection of decaying farm implements doing service as a stop-gap between a pair of magnificent pillars. Where stones of suitable dimensions are available, in granite or limestone country, for example, single uprights take the place of the built-up piers (Fig. 88). In the Aran Islands the field-walls, a single stone in width, have no permanent openings, but phantom gates—a portion of wall which is knocked down and rebuilt as required—are defined by upright slabs (Fig. 84).

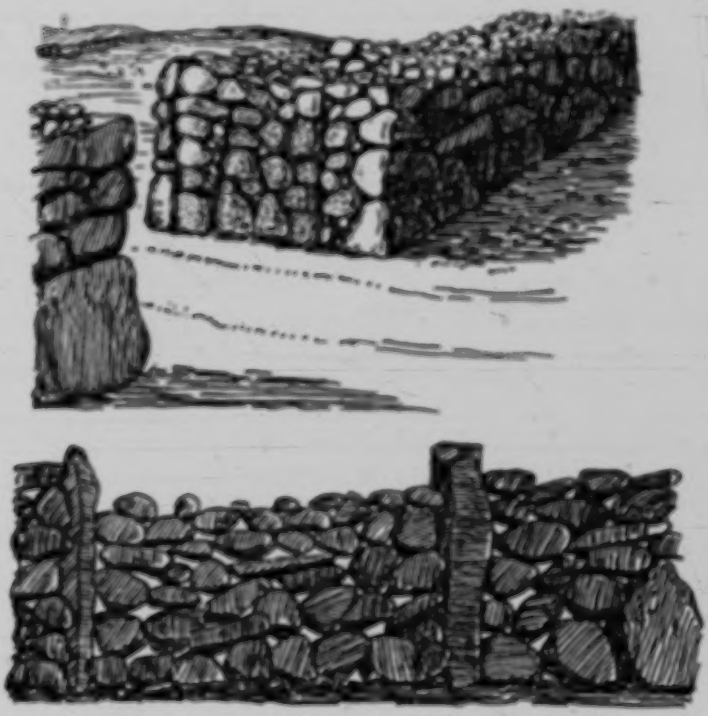

FIG. 84. *Above:* a 9-ft. wide wall in the Mourne Mountains. 'Monumental relics of secular toil, such walls may record by their successive accretions periods of agricultural activity through the ages.' *Below:* stone gateway, Aran Islands.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

This was formerly the custom also in Connemara and Co. Clare, and it finds an explanation not so much in the scarcity of wood or iron for gates as in the desirability of giving the wind no way into the fields. Such stone walls, seemingly artless constructions of rough boulders, are characteristic of the thin-soiled hillsides throughout Ireland. Most of them are of no great age, for permanent enclosure on this scale is comparatively recent, yet dry-stone walls were built by the men of the megaliths, and there was a lingering tradition of wall-building among the stony hills, which blossomed with intricate garlands of dry-stone walls when enclosure came. What distinguishes these boulder walls is their flimsy lace-like appearance when seen against the sky. Herein lies their strength, for they are full of holes and offer less resistance to the wind than a solid wall. They are most characteristic of hillsides where stony moraines and drift-boulders occur: other types of stone call for different treatment, and taking into account those fences which are partly or entirely made of sods or earth there is an endless variety in the tens of thousands of miles of ditches which mark out this now much-enclosed land.

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To speak of a ditch without defining the Irish meaning of the word is to mislead the English reader. It is used in the sense of dyke, a raised bank, and it is not difficult to see why, since the positive and negative earth-ditch usually accompany each other, the word should change meaning. The older meaning of 'ditch' in the north of England was a bank. Similarly in Normandy the word 'fosse' is applied to a raised bank dividing the fields. An Ulster M.P. is said to have caused much amusement at Westminster in a debate on fox-hunting when describing how Irish horses jumped a ditch by changing feet on top! In the north of Ireland as in Scotland the open drain alongside the ditch is known as the sheugh.

We know from archaeological evidence that many existing types of ditch are of prehistoric antiquity. The dry-stone walls of the circular enclosures known as cashels and the earthen ditches of the countless raths of the Dark Ages were, by and large, little more than farmyard fences. Scores of existing farmsteads occupy the old sites and even when, as is more usual, the farms are on sites of fairly recent choice the ditch surrounding

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

the farmyard tends to be a substantial construction. Where the farm is a survivor of a clachan, the small fields near the house, little more than gardens in size, are surrounded by massive winding walls attractive to the eye and always worth examining. Over rough ground they pick their way erratically, incorporating great boulders which could not be moved and which, centuries ago perhaps, became the nuclei of smaller boulders cleared from the fields. Knotted tangles of walls ten or twelve feet thick have resulted, monumental relics of secular toil. Such walls may record by their successive accretions periods of agricultural activity through the ages (Fig. 34). When more stones are removed from the fields they are added as an outer skin, and one can easily recognize the latest additions by the bleached unlichened nakedness of the stones. Archaeological material may be accidentally incorporated in the core of the wall. The wall-builders, too, apparently had a habit of thrusting into the crevices curiosities picked up when working in the fields or bits of abandoned tools, and I have occasionally found prehistoric polished stone axes which their finders had pushed into a wall. The core of the wall is likely to contain similar oddments and bits of pottery, so that the excavation of old walls can be quite profitable to the archaeologist. In Denmark it has been possible to date ancient field-walls to various periods stretching back into prehistory, mainly by means of the stray objects they contain.

In Ireland the clearest evidence for the antiquity of some field boundaries comes from the remains found buried under the bogs. Examples in Co. Londonderry have been described by Dr. Oliver Davies as consisting of irregularly piled stone slabs with standing stones set at intervals.[1] Some of these ancient walls, which country people in Ulster call Danish fences, seem to have enclosed large areas and appear from their contour-alignment to have been head-dykes, enclosing land once arable, but now overgrown with peat, and demarcating it from the rough outfield. I have seen examples both in Ulster and in Munster which are of massive dry-stone work tied to great standing stones set at fairly regular intervals. Often it is only the standing stones, deep-bedded by the builders, that remain to puzzle the archaeologist. A characteristic of these fences is that

[1] O. Davies, *U.J.A.*, 2 (1939), 61–65.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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many of the stones are set vertically or diagonally.[1] Others of the same character, or equally massive earthen banks, may be observed to radiate from some of the raths or 'Danish forts' which we now know to have been farmsteads of the Dark Ages and, since they seem to have been single farms held in severalty, the enclosures which they presuppose are likely to be co-eval with the raths. Indeed Professor O'Riordain has claimed that the existing earthen field fences around the group of raths at Cush in Co. Limerick closely follow those of the late Bronze Age which were 'essentially similar' . . . 'the present-day field system is the direct descendant of the ancient one'.[2]

Much smaller and more irregular are the walls one sees associated with areas of megalithic settlement, though this may be because of their great age. Indeed one example recently discovered during the excavation of a megalithic tomb in Co. Down, which was older than the construction of the cairn and partly preserved by it, was built in coursed dry-stone work.[3] We have as yet little information to draw on but it seems likely that these oldest walls were mainly the result of the casual piling-up of stones cleared from little patches of cultivated ground. Some of the great walls associated with clachans and referred to above may well be built on the foundations of such lines of stones pitched around and between bedded boulders which could not be moved. Yet the size of some of the stones built into these ancient walls is astonishing. I have watched a loose-limbed farmer, who seemed to inherit the physical characters as well as the skills of the megalith builders, handle with superb ease great boulders which one would think it beyond human power to move. A stout timber or iron bar and a sturdy slipe (Chapter XIII) are the tools used. Alternatively boulders may be buried *in situ* if there is sufficient depth of soil, but until recently there was a reluctance, for superstitious reasons, to break up large stones. I have not come across the old miners' practice of cracking stones with fire,[4] and except near towns or quarries the splitting of field stones by means of wedges, 'plug

[1] O. Davies, loc. cit., 62.
[2] S. P. O'Riordain, *P.R.I.A.*, 45 (1940), 83–181.
[3] A. E. P. Collins and D. M. Waterman, *Millin Bay, a late Neolithic Cairn in Co. Down*, H.M.S.O. (1955), 8.
[4] But A. Young (*Tour*, 2, 115) describes the process near Killarney in 1778.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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and feathers', or explosives is a comparatively recent development. These methods took a heavy toll of the megalithic monuments of granite-quarrying districts such as the Mourne Mountains in the nineteenth century, though superstitious tales are still told of the misfortunes which befell the stone-workers.

Another type of stone ditch popular in the limestone plain of east Galway is curiously similar to the Scots Galloway dyke and may well have been introduced by improving landlords or their agents. The lower portion of the ditch is a dry wall of small stones about two feet high carefully levelled on top, and on this rests a wall of boulders of lace-work type two or three feet high. The heavy superstructure not only secures the lower part with its weight but, perhaps because of its slight overhang and tottering appearance, is said to deter cattle and sheep from approaching the wall (Fig. 35). The low walls of loosely piled

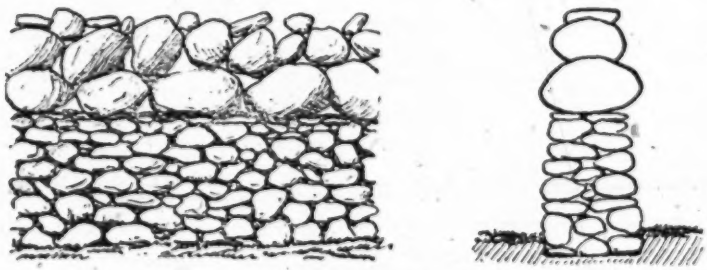

FIG. 35. East Galway ditch of Galloway type, and cross-section.

stones on Rathlin Island are said to act as a deterrent on the principle of the modern electric fence: I was told that animals give them a wide berth once having learnt that they collapse almost at a touch. At the other extreme are the ten-foot walls which run for miles around many demesnes, isolating them physically from the surrounding country so that only at the entrances or the now numerous gaps does one get a glimpse of the decayed grandeur inside. A good many of them are 'famine walls' built to relieve distress during famine years, in return for a meagre allowance of food and a wage of perhaps a few pence per day.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

FARMYARDS AND FENCES

Throughout the lowland farming country the commonest ditch is an earthen bank faced on one side with stones and planted with quicks slipped in near the base among the stones (Fig. 36). This was the 'approved mode' of enclosing the land

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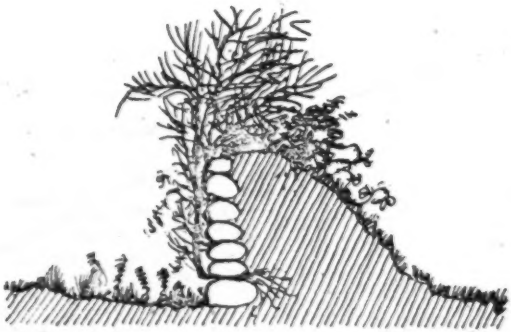

FIG. 36. The hedged ditch, cross-section.

advocated by the reformers from the late eighteenth century onwards, but it was noted that 'the planting of hedgerows was repugnant to the practice of the country' and in many districts the hedges were neglected and the livestock still had to be tethered in the fields.[1] The tradition of temporary fences died hard. 'A year's ditch passeth for a very strong fence', wrote Sir John Davies to the Earl of Salisbury in 1606. These sod fences were deliberately thrown down after harvest, and the decayed sods enriched the soil. The *Advertisements for Ireland* published in 1623 state: 'Their fields lie open and unclosed. Where wood is plentiful they hedge in all their corn with stakes and bushes and pull them down in the winter and burn them.'[2] When fixed field-divisions were adopted, the hedgeless earthen bank was preferred in many parts of the country, usually growing a luxuriant crop of brambles and gorse (whins). These were a useful source of firewood and provided both shelter and food for the livestock, the 'pounded whins' being fed to horses. The knocking stones, flat slabs or stone basins where the whins

[231] [246]

[1] *Report on the Estates of the Drapers' Company in Ireland*, 1829.
[2] *Advertisements for Ireland* (1623), Ed. G. O'Brien (1923), 33.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

351 417 [246] were 'melled' with a wooden maul, are sometimes to be seen in the farmyard, and there were a few water-driven 'whin-mills'. Their use is almost forgotten as is the custom of growing a field of whins to provide fodder. This was done in Co. Cavan and it is a recognized method of land utilization in the poorer parts of Brittany. A gorse hedge near the homestead is still popular as a place for drying clothes on washing day. 'Firing being scarce', wrote Gabriel Beranger of the barony of Bargy and Forth, 'they plant all their ditches with furze, which serves them for firing, and is reckoned equal in value with the produce of the land.'[1] Small farmers in Co. Down preferred wide earthen ditches because, as Binns was told: 'we have both sides of the ditch for feeding the cattle, and whins to bruise for the horses'.[2] The economy of the grass-grown ditch becomes clearer when we realize that on boulder-strewn hillsides where wide stone ditches separate the tiny fields a high proportion of the land is sterilized. Such wide earth banks often serve as footpaths where [487] the land is wet, and in Co. Limerick I have seen cart tracks on top of them. This habit may go back to the wide balks between some of the openfield patches, which were used as access ways where the boggy fields were too soft to take a cart. Such double ditches, when faced with stones on both sides, are undoubtedly an old type of fence, for they are characteristic of many raths or Dark Age farmsteads. These 'dry fences' are common in Co. Kerry and also in north Antrim, and they occur in Brittany, and in parts of Anglesey and north Pembrokeshire. In stony country the filling of a double ditch may be of loose stones gathered from the fields, and here again we have ancient examples in the enclosing walls of small cashels which are the equivalent in thin-soiled areas of the raths of the lowlands.

351 What nearly all these many types of field fences have in common is their untidy appearance. Dry stone walls tend to be cyclopean, lacking the precision of those of north England or the Cotswold country. Rough glacial boulders are a poor substitute for oolite, and one recalls the comment of Sir John Russell that Irish architecture suffered because of the virtual absence of Jurassic rocks in the geological series. Rarely does

[1] Lady Wilde, 'Memoir of Gabriel Beranger', *J.R.S.A.I.* (1876), 192.
[2] J. Binns, *Miseries and Beauties*, 1, 60.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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one see a well-kept or neatly trimmed field-hedge and never a staked and pleached hedgerow to compare with those of the English lowlands. The whole art of hedging is poorly developed, and the craft of laying a hedge almost unknown. The thorns are allowed to grow freely—as though they were the true fairy thorns which must never be damaged—and cut back ruthlessly at long intervals, when the many gaps are stuffed with dead thorns. The truth is that it is the bank rather than the hedge which makes the fence, and the thorns do little more than provide some shelter for livestock. But while the earthen banks grow tall hedges they will not support good hedgerow timber. The few starved ashes, sycamores or stunted beeches compare very unfavourably with the great oaks and elms of the English Midlands. Arthur Young brought his English common sense and prejudices to bear on the subject: 'To permit a hedge to grow too long without cutting not only ruins it for a fence but spoils the trees that are planted with it . . . I never saw a single capital tree growing on these banks.' And consequently, 'the greatest part of the kingdom presents a naked bleak dreary view for want of wood.'[1] Elsewhere he writes, of Mitchelstown in Co. Cork, 'An oak, an ash, or an elm is almost as great a rarity as an olive, an orange or a mulberry.'[2]

The planting of hedges and hedgerow timber had been advocated by improvers since the sixteenth century. The Ordinances for the Government of Ireland (1534) lay down that 'every husbandman having a plough within the English Pale shall set by the year twelve ashes in the ditches and closes of his farm'. The ditch-bank was evidently already a feature of the farms in the Pale, and it is interesting that there, as generally through the east and north of the country, the ash—providing the most useful timber for general farm use—is the favourite hedgerow tree. But it is in the closes (the farmyards) that one sees most trees today, chief among them the sycamore whose dense foliage gives protection from the winds and from the prying eyes of neighbours. Next to the sycamore in popularity, and similarly providing a thick cover, come the beech and the conifers, and it is noteworthy that none of these species is

[1]Arthur Young, *Tour*, 2, part 2, 66
[2]ibid, 2, 272.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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native to the country. Around the coasts the sycamore is almost the only tree that persists, for it will stand up to the salt-laden gales everywhere save on the most exposed parts of the west coast. R. U. Sayce has recorded the belief, from Montgomeryshire, that 'sycamore trees keep the fairies away and stop them spoiling the milk',[1] but this bit of lore cannot be of any great antiquity since the tree did not reach Britain from its home in the mountain belt of southern Europe until the sixteenth century. It presumably arose from the association of the tree with the farmyard. In Ireland the sycamore probably came in with the early seventeenth century planters, though the beech may be a medieval or even older introduction. Both trees had many economic uses, especially for dry-coopering, that is the manufacture of provision casks and butter firkins, and the sycamore is an excellent wood for turnery. Later, as the linen industry became mechanized, the beetling mills demanded sycamore for the great beam of the engine and beech for the vertical beetles.

The lay-out of farm buildings seems to have been, in the native single-farms, as haphazard and formless as was that of the houses themselves in an old clachan. As separate farms with outbuildings ('offices') became fashionable improvements after the middle of the eighteenth century, the latter were built for convenience of access and they were put close to the farmhouse, either attached to one end or lying parallel to provide a windbreak. Only in the planted areas does one find old examples of planned 'courtyard farms' where the house and offices enclose a square or rectangular yard. I fancy the stone or wooden 'hovel-stands' with their picturesque mushroom-like staddle-stones are also confined to planted districts. In the west a favourite method of making stacks is to build them about a central pole. (See p. 164.)

The wayside style is another absentee in the native Irish countryside, as is the footpath which is its companion. Short-cuts are rarely worth while in a land of tiny fields, and if there is a right of way there is sure to be a tolerable road. In fact there are so many farm lanes and access ways to mountain, seashore or bog that an economist might regard the amount of land so taken out of cultivation as excessive. It has been

[1] R. U. Sayce, *Montgomeryshire Collections*, 45 (1938).

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

582 621 593 three sisters, and ten of two—and they tend to visit together often and lend mutual economic and emotional support.

591 428 342 822 776 When a man marries, his parents relinquish the holding, and its direction passes into the hands of the newlyweds. Arensberg and Kimball talk of the "west room" complex, which may exist in many parts of peasant Ireland but does not in Inis Beag. Houses in north and west Co. Clare "with remarkable uniformity" are aligned east and west, and on the son's marriage the old couple moves into the westernmost room "behind the hearth." This room is linked with the Celtic supernatural, for fairy paths are thought to be located along the western side of many houses, and the pagan afterworld—the Isle of the Blest—is a sunken land mass in the nearby western sea (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:134–136). In Inis Beag, on the contrary, over one-third of the domiciles since 1841 have been aligned north and south, fairy trails are found mostly at the back of the island, and a retiring couple may choose any of three rooms (or more in modern homes) to move into. The west room of Co. Clare is called simply "the room" in Inis Beag.

342 [178] [177] [65] Thirty-four of the 71 inhabited buildings in the island have thatched roofs (see Fig. 8), while the others are antiquated houses which lately have been renovated, mainly by replacing thatch with slate, or are newly built. The last of the traditional "cabins" or "cottages" were constructed in the 1930s, and the first of the modern ones during the 1890s—with two stories initially, and styled and subsidized by the Congested Districts Board. Old and renovated houses are rectangular in shape, are constructed of whitewashed stones with concrete floors, and have a large central kitchen with doors or half-doors to the outside both front and back. "The room" is beyond the kitchen at one end of the building, and two bedrooms (one in the most ancient cabins) are at the other. Lofts for sleeping are in the gable of the roof above "the room" and bedrooms, and are entered by ladder [372] or staircase from the kitchen. Fireplaces share a common wall and chimney between the kitchen and "the room," as they also may between the two bedrooms; but the kitchen hearth is the most used, and in some homes is not permitted to die out.

351 [343] [244] The space between the cottage and the low stone wall and outbuildings surrounding it is called the "street." Outbuildings at the back include a toilet and various storage sheds—for spuds and turf sods in particular, although the latter often are stacked instead against a gable of the cabin. In a portion of the street or a small field beyond the wall, a garden for vegetables is maintained for easy access.

342 [262] [264] [415] [118] [362] The kitchen doors of the house sometimes open into small halls in the front or back, or both, and when the weather is not too cold or blustery, the door opening to the street on the windward side is kept closed and its opposite open. In the kitchen, which is the center of family activities, are: the fireplace at which cooking is done with pot and cooking ovens hung from an iron hook; the table around which the family eats their five daily meals; the sideboard, known as a "dresser," filled with "delph"—both everyday and "best" china; the religious shrine with "blessed lamp" surrounded by religious pictures and sacred objects; and, occasionally, a "settlebed" which, when closed, serves as a bench during the daytime.

354 [352] [616] [593] [178] The hearth in the kitchen is indented into the wall to provide two hobs, or seats, and on a chilly or dampish day the folk will nestle inside the fireplace and sit tightly together on a bench drawn up close to the turf fire for warmth. This

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

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782 year during the early morning. The folk visit the church and graveyard throughout the day and are awarded indulgences for their prayers in behalf of souls of the dead residing in Purgatory. In the cemetery, prayers are offered for relatives, one at a time, and then for everyone buried there, those lost at sea, and those who have no one to pray for them. An islander going to the chapel makes a succession of visits inside to pray, retiring to the churchyard after each prayer; an indulgence is granted for every visit, and some children carry small stones and pile them outside of the chapel to keep count of the indulgences thus acquired. It is said of those who remain longest in the cemetery and make the most number of visits to the chapel that they are attempting to mollify the ghosts of relatives whom they treated badly when alive.

796 The 12 days of Christmas commence with the feast of the Nativity on December 25th and end with the feast of the Epiphany on January 6th, and include the feasts of St. Stephen on December 26th, Holy Innocents on December 28th, and Circumcision on January 1st. This is the high point of the year for the folk, even though it is a much quieter period today than it was half a century ago, when social concerns outweighed religious ones. Work is suspended altogether on Christmas and the three days following it and on January 1st and 6th, and during
[167] the rest of the period only "light chores" are done. Importance is attached to the
[582] 12 days over and above their religious significance and the fact that little work is
[574] done; for at this time emigrants return to Inis Beag on holiday; if a marriage is to occur during the year it is likely to be arranged then; at least one party usually is given which attracts most of the adults; and the men gather in the pubs on
[621] several nights to sing, dance, and tell stories. For weeks before Christmas, rumors abound as to which relatives will visit the island, who will marry whom, and where the party will take place; these serve to sharpen the anticipation of the islanders and to make them less mindful of the worsening of the weather.

[292] In preparation for the Christmas season, new clothes are fashioned—as at Easter—to be worn initially on the five feast days, and it is usual for a man needing
[351] a new *crios* to have it woven in time for Christmas mass. Houses and streets are
[356] cleaned and repaired, fireplaces whitewashed, and supplies are taken in for
[262] the 12 days as steamer service is curtailed. On Christmas Eve, a special dish of
[364] corned ling or cod smothered in sauce is served at "Christmas supper," and large white candles purchased in the shops are placed on the dining table and in one or more windows of the cottage, to be burned nightly during the 12 days. The sight from the sea of the darkened island with its hundreds of candles rivals in beauty the view of the mainland coast far away on St. John's Eve, when bonfires are
[574] lighted as far as the eye can see. Relatives visit one another after Christmas supper,
[431] and when the children have been put to bed, stockings are hung above the fireplace and filled by the parents with oranges, candies, ribbons, pencils, handkerchiefs,
[861] and toys for the infants. Santa Claus is the gift giver, so infants are taught, and thus he can be used to promote good behavior on their part in the weeks prior to Christmas; this belief seldom persists into childhood, however, as older children
[431] are eager to disabuse their younger siblings of it. Adults usually do not exchange gifts, but they receive them from kin and acquaintances abroad to whom they in
[262] turn send Christmas cards. On Christmas Day, special cakes and breads are served